



ELECTION FOCUS 2008



June 5, 2008

No. 8

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[How Will Candidates Explain Stances on Meeting Hostile Leaders? \(06-02-2008\)](#)

Political analysts detail candidates' likely strategies

Senator John McCain and the man he is expected to face in November for the presidency, Senator Barack Obama, are presenting contrasting philosophies on whether to negotiate with hostile foreign dictators and rogue leaders, with the question becoming which position will be more attractive to American voters, according to a leading political analyst. Illinois Senator Obama has stated his willingness to meet with Cuba's Raúl Castro and Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. McCain, a senator from Arizona, opposes such talks, saying Obama's stance would only embolden America's "implacable foes." Norman Ornstein, resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research in Washington, spoke recently with America.gov.

[Presidential Campaign Enters New Phase as Primaries End \(06-02-2008\)](#) **Obama declares victory; Clinton says she is undecided on future plans**



Probable Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama and his wife, Michelle, at a primary-night rally June 3 in St. Paul, Minnesota

As the final Democratic primary voters cast ballots in South Dakota and Montana June 3, Illinois Senator Barack Obama told his supporters that, "because of you," he is expected to become the first African-American presidential nominee of a major political party. "Tonight, after 54 hard-fought contests, our primary season has finally come to an end... Thousands of miles have been traveled. Millions of voices have been heard. And because of what you said, because you decided that change must come to Washington ... tonight we mark the end of one historic journey with the beginning of another, a journey that will bring a new and better day to America," Obama said.



Supporters await the arrival of Illinois Senator Barack Obama for a primary-night rally June 3 in St. Paul, Minnesota.

[McCain, Obama Built Images by Pushing Lobbying Restrictions \(05-28-2008\)](#)

Now they trade charges of hypocrisy on lobbyists staffing campaigns

Lobbying, according to the U.S. Senate's Web site, is "the practice of trying to persuade legislators to propose, pass, or defeat legislation or to change existing laws." A lobbyist "presents information on legislative proposals to support his or her clients' interests."

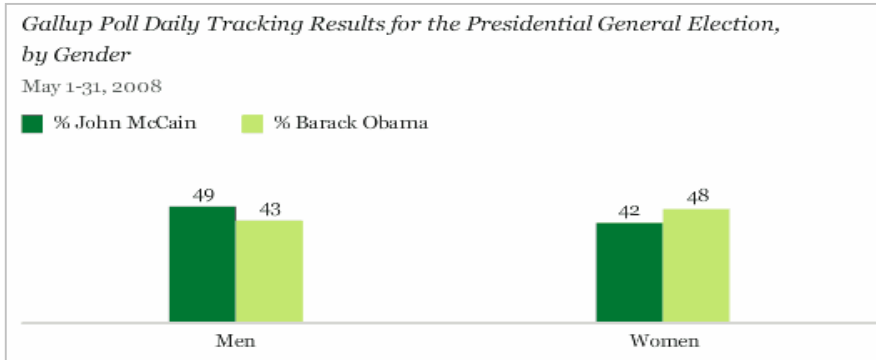
[OpenSecrets.org](#), a Web site of the nonpartisan Center for Responsive Politics, takes a more provocative view: "Professional advocates make big bucks to lobby members of Congress and government officials on the issues their clients care about. But the money that industries, companies, unions and issue groups spend on lobbying is often just a drop in the bucket compared to what they can reap in return if their lobbyists are successful."

Daily updated information is available at a special **U.S. Elections page** on [America.gov](#):
<http://uspolitics.america.gov/uspolitics/elections/>

POLLS

[An Early Gallup Road Map to the McCain-Obama Matchup](#) - Gallup Poll, June 5, 2008

Obama's appeal to young, highly educated apparent in general election.



As the general election campaign between Barack Obama and John McCain unofficially gets underway, many of the typical Democratic-Republican divides in the electorate -- such as those by religion, gender, marital status, and income. Additionally, some of the special appeals each candidate had with voters in the nomination phase of the election (on

the basis of age, education, race, and political affiliation) seem to be carrying over into the general election. These findings are based on aggregated data from Gallup Poll Daily tracking in May, consisting of more than 25,000 total interviews with registered voters nationwide. Obama (supported by an average of 45.6% of national registered voters) and McCain (favored by 45.4%) were essentially tied in the full May dataset.

[Americans Favor President Meeting With U.S. Enemies](#) - Gallup Poll, June 2, 2008

Large majorities of Democrats and independents, and even about half of Republicans, believe the president of the United States should meet with the leaders of countries that are considered enemies of the United States. Overall, 67% of Americans say this kind of diplomacy is a good idea.

[Electoral College: Democrats 200 Republicans 189 Leaners 111 Toss-Up 38](#)

Rasmussen Reports, June 2, 2008

Rasmussen released new polling data showing Barack Obama opening a modest lead in [Colorado](#) and John McCain holding a double-digit lead in [Florida](#). However, as with all recent state polling, these results do nothing to change the Electoral College projections of, the Rasmussen Reports [Balance of Power Calculator](#). On Monday, Democrats continue to lead in states with 200 Electoral Votes while the GOP has the advantage in states with 189. States with 111 Votes are "leaners," and states with 38 Votes are Toss-Ups.

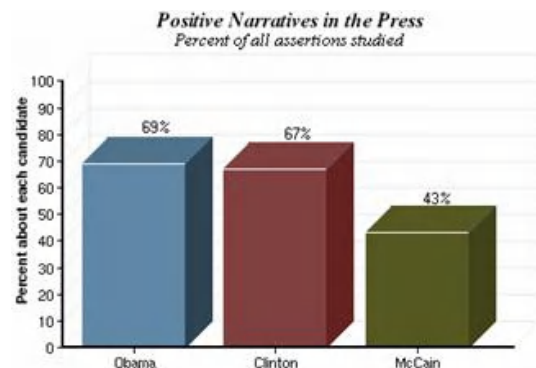
[In Tight General Election, McCain's Negatives Mostly Political, Obama's More Personal](#)

Pew Research Center, May 29, 2008 ... when the Illinois Democrat is tested against John McCain in a general election matchup, he now runs about even against the presumptive Republican nominee....

[Character and the Primaries of 2008](#) - Pew Research Center, May 29, 2008

What Were the Media Master Narratives about the Candidates During the Primary Season?

A new analysis of media coverage during the first ten weeks of the 2008 primary season finds the dominant personal narratives about Obama and Clinton were almost identical in tone, and were both twice as positive as negative. The coverage of McCain's character was less positive than that of either Democratic candidate.



[In Tight General Election, McCain's Negatives Mostly Political, Obama's More Personal](#)

- Pew Research Center, May 29, 2008

While Obama has opened up a wide lead in the Democratic primary, he now runs about even against McCain. The tightening general election shows some sully of Obama's personal image over the past three months, which is in some measure a negative reaction from frustrated Clinton supporters. McCain's image has also become more negative since February, however, unlike Obama, those who disapprove cite his political beliefs.

CAMPAIGN 2008



[A Defining Moment for Our Nation](#) – Real Clear Politics, June 4, 2008

Tonight, after fifty-four hard-fought contests, our primary season has finally come to an end... Tonight, I can stand before you and say that I will be the Democratic nominee for President of the United States.

[Clinton Thanks Supporters in New York](#) - Real Clear Politics, June 4, 2008 ... Now the question is, where do we go from here... This has been a long campaign, and I will be making no decisions tonight...

[It's Now All About Respect](#) - Real Clear Politics, June 4, 2008

How can a party so divided, repair itself in time for the November election? The answer is simple -- concentrate on fundamentals no more complicated than the Golden Rule. If Obama supporters want the votes of Clinton supporters, they had better not take them for granted. A Clinton voter and an Obama voter team up to try to help Obama supporters understand Clinton supporters, why they feel so insulted, and how the Obama camp can offer them the real respect they deserve.

[Imagining a McCain or Obama Presidency](#) - Real Clear Politics, June 4, 2008 ... For the decisions that will help determine the future of America's role in the world, with implications for global markets and international politics, the 2008 presidential election offers clear alternatives.

[McCain's Speech in New Orleans](#) - Real Clear Politics, June 4, 2008 ... The wrong change looks not to the future but to the past for solutions that have failed us before and will surely fail us again. I have a few years on my opponent, so I am surprised that a young man has bought in to so many failed ideas...

[The Cult of the Presidency](#) - Cato Institute, June 4, 2008 This article appeared in the June 2008 issue of Reason magazine. The chief executive of the United States is no longer a mere constitutional officer charged with faithful execution of the laws. He is a soul nourisher, a hope giver, a living American talisman against hurricanes, terrorism, economic downturns, and spiritual malaise...

[What the Swing States of 2004 Look Like Now](#) – CQ Politics, June 1, 2008 - There were 11 states in the 2004 election that were decided by five points or less. CQ Politics took a look at what the most recent polls are saying about them now.

[THE "CONTROVERSIAL" CAUCUSES: An Outsized Influence in 2008](#) - Center for Politics, May 29, 2008 ... Maybe one of the most intriguing - and nefarious - aspects of this long-running Democratic presidential campaign is that the legitimacy of the system itself has come into question...

[CAN MCCAIN OVERCOME THE TRIPLE WHAMMY? Electoral Barometer Shows Democratic Advantage](#) - Center for Politics, May 29, 2008 - In November, voters will face a choice between two rather atypical presidential candidates. For the first time in over fifty years, the party that controls the White House will not be represented by either the incumbent president or the incumbent vice-president...

Election Calendar

[2008 Presidential Primary Dates and Candidate Filing Deadlines for Ballot Access](#) (pdf)

[2008 Republican Primary Schedule](#) [2008 Democratic Primary Schedule](#)

June 3 Democratic Primaries Results: [Montana Results](#) [SD Results](#)



[Republican National Convention](#)

September 1-4, 2008,
Minneapolis - Saint Paul, Minnesota

[Democratic National Convention](#)

August 25-28, 2008
Denver, Colorado



ARTICLE ALERT

OBAMA IS EUROPE'S DREAM CANDIDATE, BUT WE MAY HAVE TO SETTLE FOR MCSAME. *Timothy Garton Ash, The Guardian, Thursday June 5 2008* ...We'd like the Democratic victor in charge but must still prepare for a hawkish McCain presidency, and advance our own agenda ... [FULL TEXT](#)

THE 2008 PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARIES: WHAT IN AMERICA'S NAME IS GOING ON? – Charles E. Cook, *Washington Quarterly, Summer 2008, pp. 193-204* ... Heading toward the summer of 2008, national polls and state-by-state electoral college analyses point toward another very close race, just as the last two have been... Historically, political parties have a difficult time winning the presidency for three elections in a row... [FULL TEXT](#)

SHARP CONTRAST. John Maggs. *National Journal, May 31, 2008*

Both men back tax cuts, but tax cuts of very different kinds. Tighter financial regulation is more likely with Obama than McCain. How the economy looks in 2009 may be more important than what they say today. [FULL TEXT](#)

CHANGING THE US ELECTORATE. ARE DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS RESHAPING US POLITICS? Alan Greenblatt. *CQ Researcher, May 30, 2008, pp. 459-480.* Demographics have played nearly as large a role in this year's presidential race as health care, war and the economy. The Democratic field has come down to an African-American man dominating voting among blacks, the young and highly educated voters and a white woman winning older voters, Hispanics and the white working class. [FULL TEXT REQUEST](#)

MCCAIN'S TURNING POINT. Linda Douglass. *National Journal, April 26, 2008.* John McCain's three years as Navy's lobbyist in the Senate opened up a new world -- and new connections -- for the war hero. The former POW quickly befriended senators from both parties and absorbed lessons about national security, foreign policy, and political courage. [FULL TEXT](#)

THE FIRST 21ST-CENTURY CAMPAIGN. Brownstein, Ronald. *National Journal, 16, April 19, 2008.* Brownstein examines the many reasons why he believes that the Democratic battle for the presidential nomination will be remembered as "the first true 21st-century campaign." He believes that the pairing of intense anti-Bush emotions on the part of Democrats combined with major advances in information technology are responsible for creating this new style of campaigning. Brownstein says "this transformation may be changing the model of what it takes to succeed in presidential politics. [FULL TEXT](#)

THE CASE FOR KEEPING THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE. Walter Berns, *American Enterprise Institute (AEI), April 7, 2008, 2p.* "Debate over whether to keep the Electoral College or move to a system of direct popular election of the president is a hardy perennial of the presidential election season. In this article, the eminent constitutional scholar Walter Berns reminds us of the arguments in favor of the Electoral College and dissects the proposals of those who would nullify it without having to abolish it." *Walter Berns is a resident scholar at AEI.* [FULL TEXT](#)

Plus - [Google News on Elections](#) updated continuously



UPCOMING EVENTS



Video Webcast with U.S. Experts: [U.S. Elections](#)

Join [America.gov's elections experts](#) - another in series of online video webcasts covering the issues and personalities of the 2008 election.
With **Chuck Todd** - NBC News' political director.

Date & Time: **June 16, 2008, 09:00 a.m. EDT (1300 GMT)**

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